

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 16 and 24 have been amended. Claims 1-13, 19 and 25 have been cancelled. Claims 16-18, 24 and 26-31 are pending in the application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1-13 have been cancelled. Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 16-19 and 24-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kashimura (US 4,772,007).

Kashimura discloses a cut sheet holding a feeding apparatus. In Kashimura, a separating pawl 224 cooperable with the paper supply rollers 205 to separate cut sheets one by one from the uppermost layer is formed on the fore end of each of the separating pawl members 221 and 223. An ear 225 extending inwardly and engageable with the intermediate plate 207 is formed on the rear end portion of each of the separating pawl members 221 and 223 so that when the intermediate plate 207 is depressed, the separating pawls 224 and 224 are upwardly pivoted in response thereto. Kashimura, 8:35-8:44 and Figure 14.

In Kashimura, reference numeral 226 designates a bundle of loaded cut sheets. An end surface cam 227 is formed on the boss portion of the lever 211 so that when the lever 211 is pivoted clockwise, the release arm 216 can be pivoted about a support shaft 215 in the clockwise direction and the side keeping member 218 can be moved away from the side edge of the cut sheets against the force of the spring 217. That is, by operating the lever 211, the intermediate plate 207 can be depressed and the front cover 204 can be opened and at the same time, the side keeping member 218 can be retracted. Kashimura, 8:45-8:55 and Figures 13-16.

Claims 1-5

Claims 1-5 have been cancelled.

Claims 16-19 and 24-32

Amended claims 16 and 24 recite: "...wherein the first and second finger devices move independently from each other." In contrast to claims 16 and 24, Kashimura discloses a single separating pawl 224 cooperable with the paper supply rollers 205 to separate cut sheets formed on the fore end of each of the separating pawl members 221 and 223. An ear 225 engaged with the intermediate plate 207 is formed on the rear end portion of each of the separating pawl members 221 and 223 so that when the intermediate plate 207 is depressed, the separating pawls 224 and 224 are upwardly pivoted in response thereto. Since both separating pawl members 221 act in response to the ear 225, they do not act independently of each other.

Claims 17, 18 and 26-31 are dependent on claims 16 and 24, respectively, and are therefore believed to allowable for the foregoing reasons. Claims 19 and 25 have been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6, 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashimura (US 4,772,007) in view of Kobayashi et al.

Claims 6, 7 and 9 have been cancelled.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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